

FROM THE OFFICE OF

ROBERT A. LOVINGOOD

First District Supervisor, County of San Bernardino

For information, contact Don Holland (760) 995-8100

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE DATE: Aug. 8, 2013

Lovingood: Keep solar projects out of Oak Hills

After more than two hours of public comment, the San Bernardino County Planning Commission voted 5-0 Thursday against a 20-acre solar project proposed for a rural Oak Hills neighborhood.

First District Supervisor Robert Lovingood, who watched the hearing via live video, welcomed the move as a step in the right direction and said Oak Hills is the wrong place for commercial solar projects.

"My position has always been that San Bernardino County welcomes renewable energy project applications, but they must be placed in the right locations."

More than three dozen people spoke against the project, which many Oak Hills residents say will harm property values, create dust, blight, glare and excessive rainwater runoff. One Oak Hills homeowner said the solar proposal has already hurt values, citing a lot adjacent to the solar project that sold in recent days for less than half its fair market value.

Hesperia Mayor Pro Tem Thurston "Smitty" Smith was among those who spoke against the project. Smith said that although the solar proposal is outside Hesperia's city limits, it is within Hesperia's sphere of influence. He added that the City Council voted to oppose the project and that the proposed development would not be allowed under Hesperia's development code.

The 2.7 megawatt solar project would be located between Fir Street, El Centro Road, Fuente Avenue and Bandicoot Trail.

The Planning Commission directed county staff to incorporate public comments and draft negative findings on the project. The commission will then consider those negative findings when it votes on the project Sept. 19. If the commission rejects the proposal, the applicant could appeal to the Board of Supervisors. In July, the Board unanimously extended its temporary solar moratorium, however the Oak Hills project application was not subject to the moratorium because county staff had deemed the application complete.